rules were interpreted rather too strictly and the result was that applications were refused in several deserving cases.

Reply.—Permission is necessary under the Royal Proclamation and cannot be dispensed with. Information is called for on certain matters which are deemed to be absolutely necessary in the interests of public peace and the rules apply not only to Christian churches, but also to Hindu temples and Mussalman mosques. I do not know of another country where there is so much of religious toleration as Travancore, and if a preliminary enquiry is conducted before formal sanction is given for the erection of a place of public worship, it is not because the permission applied for should not be granted, but with a view to avoid all possibilities of riots or friction in the future. As regards the delay complained of, steps will be taken to minimise it as much as possible.

189. Desirability of Government lending money for house-building.

Mr. G. Sankaranarayana Iyer (*Shencottah*) said that in congested areas fires frequently occurred and the Government now granted reeds and bamboos free of cost to the sufferers in some cases. As this temporary relief did not completely protect house-owners from future danger, the member suggested that money might be lent to them at low interest to tile their buildings.

Reply.—The Towns Conservancy and Improvement Regulation contains a provision for affording relief in certain directions. Beyond this it is not possible for Government to go and grant the prayer now made. In cases of wholesale conflagration due to accident or even mishap, specific recommendations made by Peishkars as to the grant of timber, bamboo, &c., will be considered. Similar relief will be afforded in cases of submergence by floods also.

190. Establishment of a National Bank with the aid of Government.

Mr. S. Swamy Iyengar of Trivandrum (*Nominated*) brought forward this subject.

Reply.—This is not practicable. But if banks are started by private agencies, the question of what aid could be given by Government will be considered.

191. Giving all Government contracts to Natives.

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